

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION - Please replace the following paragraph(s):

Page 15, line 20 to Page 16, line 2:

Switches cannot be adjacent to one another for networking purposes if they are not part of the same stack. So, they agree on the stack identifier before determining adjacencies for a variety of reasons. As discussed below, in one embodiment, the stack identifier corresponds to a master switch. The adjacencies are used by the master switch to determine a topology for the stack. If the master switch is yet to be designated, then ~~there is no need~~ there is no need to record an adjacency.

Page 17, line 21 to Page 18, line 6:

In block 710, the master switch accesses the set of adjacencies in the distributed dictionary as reported by all of the switches. In block 720, the master switch provides the set of adjacencies to a graph-theory algorithm. In one embodiment, a known shortest path first (SPF) algorithm is used. The algorithm operates on a set of nodes and links between nodes to determine the shortest path between any two nodes. In one embodiment, ~~SPF operates on the bases~~ operates on the basis of propagation delay through the respective network paths. In addition to determining shortest paths, SPF also ensures that paths do not loop back on themselves, which could potentially cause lost data or other problems.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY